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Monday, 17 October 2005, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Ungureanu	(Romania)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Katti
	Argentina	Mr. D'Alotto
	Benin	Mr. Djakpo
	Brazil	Mr. Tarrisse da Fontoura
	China	Mr. Cheng Jingye
	Denmark	Ms. Kardel
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Matsuura
	Philippines	Mr. Mercado
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Thomson
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mrs. Taj
	United States of America	Mrs. Patterson

Agenda

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

Letter dated 10 October 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2005/638)

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05-55653 (E)

The meeting was suspended at 1.20 p.m. and resumed at 3.15 p.m.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Greece, who will also speak on behalf of the Chairman-in-Office of the South-East European Cooperation Process.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): Mr. President, thank you for taking the time to come to New York to preside over this important debate on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. I would also like to welcome the representatives of regional and subregional organizations.

Greece fully aligns itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union (EU).

Today, it is a particular honour for me to speak on behalf of the South-East European Cooperation Process, the chairmanship of which is currently held by Greece. It is a genuine mechanism of regional cooperation that springs from the countries of the region themselves — Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Greece, as well as Croatia as an observer.

This timely debate is taking place in a year that is crucial for the United Nations, just a few weeks after the High-level Plenary Meeting of world leaders in September 2005, where important decisions were taken to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations so as more effectively to meet the security challenges of our time.

The heads of State and Government recognized the importance of multilateralism in addressing those challenges. They also recognized the important contribution to peace and security by regional organizations, as provided for under Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. At the same time, they expressed their resolve to strengthen and expand cooperation between our global and regional organizations and to ensure that regional organizations that have the capacity for preventing armed conflict and for peacebuilding consider the option of placing such capacity in the framework of the United Nations.

Allow me to remind Security Council members that the need for a closer and more structured relationship between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations was also recognized by the sixth high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations that was held on 25 and 26 July 2005 at United Nations Headquarters in New York, with the participation of 20 organizations.

In his opening statement, the Secretary-General called for, among other things, a common vision of a global architecture of peace and security, with interlocking capacities, based on comparative advantages of the global and regional institutions. Participants at the meeting endorsed proposals and agreed on measures aiming at a more structured relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations.

In our view, the decision of the high-level meeting to convene on an annual basis to monitor developments in international security, to promote the goals of the United Nations and to have these meetings coincide with those held by the Security Council with regional organizations is a most important decision in terms of achieving better coordination and complementarity of agendas.

While stressing the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security, I wish to emphasize the complementarity of regional and subregional organizations in facing new threats and challenges and in promoting peace and stability, as I said in my statement at the aforementioned high-level meeting, speaking on behalf of the Security Council during the Greek presidency last July.

Today, more than ever, regional organizations have a vital role to play in conflict prevention and management, as well as in post-conflict peacebuilding. Geographic proximity and close historical and cultural ties among their members give regional organizations comparative advantages to better understand the root causes of regional conflicts and to find peaceful solutions to these problems.

Recent peace-support operations of the United Nations have been carried out in close cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. Successful and sustainable peacebuilding also requires the active involvement of regional and subregional organizations, in particular as

regards implementation of post-conflict reconstruction policies.

As a member of the European Union, Greece strongly supports cooperative and effective multilateralism and fully subscribes to the EU security strategy adopted in December 2003, which incorporates, among other things, the objectives of enhancing stability, promoting the rule of law, good governance and international justice and tackling global challenges and threats.

Regional cooperation is a key priority to an agenda for peace, stability and development. In South-Eastern Europe, it is also a key element for the fulfilment of our common strategic goal, which is integration into the larger European family — itself the most successful example of regional cooperation — in close synergy with the United Nations, as well as with other regional organizations, for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.

Following a succession of painful conflicts and crises on a long and bumpy road, our region today stands at a turning point. We are moving away from the syndrome that the Balkans were doomed to endemic and endless crises, and we are moving closer to political and social stabilization and economic development. We have a common responsibility to rise to the challenge and turn our region into a beacon of peace, stability and cooperation, acting in solidarity for the fulfilment of the aspirations of our peoples.

In this context, the South-East European Cooperation Process is gradually showing itself to be the organized voice of the region, an efficient and results-oriented mechanism aspiring to effectively contribute to peace and stability and committed to building and sustaining mutually reinforcing and effective relationships throughout our region.

This meeting offers a good opportunity to identify methods of enhancing cooperation and interaction between the United Nations and regional organizations. We believe that a closer and more effective partnership between them and a greater coordination in both policy and action is needed if we are to establish genuine complementarity.

Likewise, regional organizations should further develop their organizational capacities in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding. In this respect, we support the development of the 10-year capacity plan of the African Union.

In closing, we are convinced that the recommendations agreed by the high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional and other intergovernmental organizations concerning the institutionalization of this relationship are crucial for forging an effective partnership able to face the new challenges and threats of our time.

Mr. García Moritán (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation feels highly honoured by your presence, and we should like to thank you for the initiative of the delegation of Romania to hold this public meeting on the subject of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. We should also like to express our pleasure at the presence of the representatives of regional and subregional organizations, as well as that of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The future creation of the Peacebuilding Commission, together with the commitment of world leaders regarding the necessity to strengthen the United Nations with a view towards making it more efficient and effective, mean that cooperation with regional organizations has become a priority subject on the agenda of the United Nations. Regional organizations have the relative advantage of proximity to the conflict zone, which allows for a timely detection of symptoms of conflict in the region and the possibility of acting quickly to offer effective solutions for the peaceful settlement of conflicts. A recent example of this has involved the African Union and the Economic Community of West Africa in regard to events in certain African regions.

The added value of the regional organization in this sense is that it belongs to a geographic, economic and social environment that, in a special way, brings it closer and makes it more sensitive to the local conflict. The tasks of prevention and warning may, in many cases, require this proximity as an essential condition, as does the important function of stabilization in the construction of a stable environment. Consultation mechanisms, both formal and informal, must be promoted because they allow the United Nations to take advantage of the perspectives they offer and vice versa.

When our universal Organization examines a specific conflict, before it takes action in the field, it should, under ideal circumstances, receive the opinion and advice of the relevant regional organization and give it due consideration. Institutional experience and operational capacity must be the bases for defining the areas in which regional organizations can cooperate with the United Nations. In this sense, the experience and cooperation in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti seems an eloquent example. The Organization of American States (OAS) has provided its specific technical knowledge and has collaborated actively in the political area, specifically in voter registration, in a very satisfactory manner. In this way, the regional organization, the OAS in this case, has given fundamental support to the final goal of peace and stability in Haiti.

The Charter of the United Nations confers upon the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. This arrangement could now include the Peacebuilding Commission, which would act as a liaison body between the Security Council, other bodies of the United Nations and regional organizations and create new synergies in a post-conflict situation. By taking advantage of existing elements we avoid an unnecessary duplication of effort. Since there is a connection between security, peace and development, the specialized knowledge of regional organizations, whose original mandate used to focus on the stimulation of economic integration and commerce, may be valuable to guarantee success of the strategies for economic growth and stability in the long run.

We have referred to the important role of regional organizations in the early detection of symptoms of conflict, the offering of solutions for peaceful resolution of conflicts and the elaboration of strategies in peace consolidation in the post-conflict phase. However, we must not forget the importance of establishing official cooperation agreements between the secretariats of regional and subregional organizations and the United Nations, incorporating, if possible, armed conflict prevention and peacekeeping capacities within the forces, services and back-up equipment system of the United Nations.

Systematic cooperation of the United Nations with regional organizations would increase the capacity of the United Nations to prevent conflicts, respond quickly in the event of a conflict and provide solutions for the construction of lasting peace. The draft resolution that will soon be adopted urges us to make progress in the right direction and Argentina fully agrees with these commitments.

Mrs. Patterson (United States of America): My delegation welcomes your presence here. Your decision to preside personally over the Council's debates highlights the importance that your country places on improving the coordination between the United Nations and regional organizations. My delegation shares your interest in exploring ways to enhance that coordination as part of our continuing joint efforts to identify efficient and effective methods to help ensure international peace and security.

We welcome in particular the opportunity that today's debate represents to review cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations as well as ways to increase the impact of such cooperation in advancing Security Council objectives. The activities of regional and subregional organizations, when properly planned and capably implemented, can strengthen and reinforce a variety of critically important United Nations objectives, such as promoting democracy and human rights, strengthening international security cooperation, countering terrorism and transnational crime and supporting economic development.

Regional and subregional organizations bring unique and important connections, knowledge and experience to any effort to address a given regional issue. A cooperative, multilateral approach between the appropriate United Nations organ and the appropriate regional organization has the potential to create valuable synergies and to increase the probability of successful interventions.

Allow me to highlight a few of the relevant initiatives that the United States is undertaking in this regard. The Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) is global in scope, as its name implies, but has a particular regional emphasis on Africa. The Initiative is designed to increase the capacity of participating African countries to deploy highly trained personnel in international peace-support operations. Cooperation between GPOI and the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations will enhance interoperability among peace-support units from different countries. Increased interoperability translates into greater shared abilities to address some of the issues raised in the

draft resolution that we will adopt at the conclusion of today's debate.

The African Contingency Operations, Training and Assistance programme (ACOTA) is a specialized African peacekeeping training component of GPOI and will train selected African military contingents to carry out peace-support and humanitarian relief operations. ACOTA works with African partner armed forces and with regional and subregional organizations to coordinate crisis-response training. It is our hope and belief that ACOTA-trained units will be among the most capable available anywhere for these challenging assignments.

Partnerships with ACOTA have been developed after extensive collaboration with African countries and other stakeholders. The programme enables African military contingents from different countries to execute multinational peacekeeping operations by providing them with interoperable peace-support operations skills, including the requisite training and equipment. The programme's comprehensive approach integrates humanitarian, non-governmental and international relief organization participation into its training in order to improve critical coordination when ACOTA-trained personnel are deployed in real-world operations. The programme's support to African regional security organizations will assist the development of strong planning and organizational units capable of responding to humanitarian and peacekeeping crises in the region. Moreover, greater regional stability, created by an enhanced African peace-support capacity, will be instrumental in promoting African democracy and economic growth.

In other regions, similar efforts to enhance cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations can yield similar benefits.

My delegation is encouraged by today's debate and will study carefully the report that the Council has invited the Secretary-General to prepare on the challenges presented and the opportunities offered, as we seek to maximize the effectiveness of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. The United States will be an active participant in that ongoing and collective effort. Today's debate has been a useful way-station along that road.

Finally, my delegation concurs fully with the statement made by Assistant Secretary General Erdmann, that NATO is not a regional organization per se — the long-held and widely shared view among Member States.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Paulin Djakpo, Director of Cabinet of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and African Integration of Benin.

Mr. Djakpo (Benin) (*spoke in French*): The Minister for Foreign Affairs and African Integration of Benin very much appreciates the invitation addressed to him to participate in this meeting. As it was impossible for him to come to New York personally, he has asked me to represent him today in this public debate in the Security Council and to make the following statement on his behalf.

My country, Benin, is very grateful to the President for having organized this public meeting on a subject whose importance is undeniable in the context of the debate under way regarding the reform of the United Nations. As in other areas, it is not a question of reinventing the United Nations but of creating the conditions for the judicious application of the Charter in the spirit of the fundamental principles enshrined therein.

The Charter of the United Nations has established a system of collective security based on two pillars, namely, the primary responsibility vested in the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security and cooperation with regional organizations working in that field on the basis of subsidiarity and the obligation to be accountable. The relevant provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter are unequivocal on that point and there is no need to cite them here.

The international environment has not always been favourable to the effective implementation of those Charter provisions. However, since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of ideological confrontation between East and West, we have seen the emergence of a new community of values and an increase in cooperation between the great Powers in the area of promoting international peace and security. That has enabled the Security Council to play a greater role, as conferred upon it by the Charter. At the same time, we have seen a renewed interest on the part of States towards regional integration aiming at the promotion of peace and stability.

Among other things, that has been manifested in Africa the praiseworthy initiatives of regional economic commissions — such as the Economic Community of West African States — to find solutions to domestic armed conflicts. Both the African Union and its Peace and Security Council were established for that very reason.

Those positive developments have created the conditions for more active cooperation with the Security Council. They have also served to promote the revitalization of the collective security system instituted by the Charter, which is in line with the humanistic ideal that presided over the establishment of the United Nations itself, namely, to save future generations from the scourge of war and to promote the dignity and worth of human beings.

In that connection, we would like to pay tribute to the Secretary-General, who very early on understood the importance of both those virtuous endeavours and favoured consultations between the United Nations and representatives of regional organizations. Important results were achieved at the sixth high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional organizations, which was held in New York on 25 and 26 July 2005 and organized around the telling theme of "Partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations for a safer world".

In that regard, Benin in particular welcomes the decision to establish a standing committee charged with mobilizing political will, promoting the adoption of a long-term perspective and monitoring the decisions taken. This is an act of great importance that augurs well for the deepening of concrete institutional relations.

Similarly, we welcome the participation in today's debate of eminent representatives of major regional organizations. This is a key opportunity to define the parameters of partnership in the area of promoting international peace and security. That partnership requires the establishment of consultative mechanisms for more effective interaction between the Security Council, regional organizations and Member States, with a view to facilitating sound management of situations that could pose a threat to international peace and security. The Security Council could thereby meet its primary purpose, to prevent the breakdown of peace and, where necessary, act collectively with Member States.

However, regional organizations cannot fulfil their commitments in that partnership unless their early-warning and response capacities are strengthened to deal with situations posing a threat to international peace and security. The constraints that have surfaced as part of the efforts of the United Nations and the African Union to bring stability to the African continent demonstrate concretely the scope of the challenges that must be overcome to strengthen the partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations in the area of conflict prevention and resolution, as well as in the area of peacebuilding throughout the world. The international community as a whole stands to gain much, and must therefore act with clear-sightedness and determination.

It is in that spirit that my country fully supports the draft resolution we are to adopt at the end of our debate.

Benin would like to pay tribute to Romania not only for having undertaking this initiative, but especially for having strengthened relations between the United Nations and regional organizations and having made that a priority of its mandate in the Security Council. History will record and take the true measure of the substantial contribution that Romania has made to structure relations between the United Nations and regional organizations to further integrate the collective security system established by the Charter of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Benin for his kind words addressed to my country.

(*spoke in English*)

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it, which is contained in document S/2005/649. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Algeria, Argentina, Benin, Brazil, China, Denmark, France, Greece, Japan, Philippines, Romania, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1631 (2005).

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

May I take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to all the participants in this joint and fruitful exercise to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. I thank you all for your resilience, help, patience and good work.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.